

WASHINGTON'S BALL CLUB

Growth of the Team Representing the Capital City.

A STEADY MARCH FORWARD

Difficulties that the Messrs. Wagner have had to overcome at a Heavy Outlay of Money and Patience. A Foothold Gained and the Future Is Promising.

The season of 1896 completed twenty-one years of history of the National League, beginning with its organization in 1876 and ending with the past year.

The League began with a circuit of eight clubs in 1876; lessened its number to five in 1877, and increased to six in 1878. After that year it had a steady circuit of eight clubs, or from 1879 to 1891, inclusive.

In 1892 the circuit was enlarged to twelve teams, representing the cities of New York, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Boston, Baltimore, and Washington in the East, and Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Pittsburg, St. Louis and Louisville in the West.

It was then that the National League became the one great major and compact organization of professional baseball, having as its patrons the cream of the aristocracy of the popular pastime, and holding on its roster the names of the eminent and artistic exponents of the sport.

As stated, Washington became a member of the League in 1892, the Messrs. Wagner having acquired the franchise, upon the amalgamation of the old American Association with the larger body, which took place December 16, 1891.

The franchise, or right to the exclusive privilege of operating a League club in this city, was about the only value the Messrs. Wagner received in exchange for their outlay. The players that were transferred to them in the bargain were in the "blue" class, with one or two exceptions, and today their names are printed only on minor league score cards, or else have been dropped from the records altogether.

It was a hard task to build up a winning club that confronted the new owners, but they resolutely put their shoulders to the wheel and, despite adverse circumstances, they continued the effort and slowly but surely climbed the mountain that stood high before them.

The clubs representing the city in 1892 and 1893 were composed merely of amateurs, who were not paid for their services. In 1892 the Senators finished tenth, barely ahead of St. Louis and Baltimore in the order named. In 1893 they were the despised "tailenders," with the poor percentage of .310.

The season of 1894 witnessed the advent of Manager Schmetz, who was brought from the South by the Messrs. Wagner. With him coming the reorganization of the club along the lines of progressive and up-to-date portraiture of the game was commenced. Young and ambitious players were secured and the "dead ones" and "has-beens" were weeded out and relegated to less favorable company.

It was rather a potpourri of talent that Manager Schmetz had to work on. He had an aggregation of "all sorts" from which to choose, but he patiently added his time and carefully picked the men that he thought worthy to eventually form the nucleus of a winning team. McGuire, Joyce, Maul, Mercer, Seibach, Abbey and Cartwright were those he esteemed properly qualified to remain, and from time to time such veterans as Wise, Mulvey, Pettit, Esper and others that could be mentioned were given their tickets of leave.

The club representing the Capital in 1894 crawled out of last place and pushed Louisville into the hole.

There was no cessation of energy in 1895, and such additions were made to the strength of the club that in spite of the hardest kind of luck in the way of accidents and sickness, tenth position was reached. St. Louis finished eleventh and Louisville again bringing up the rear.

The steady though slow gains made in these two seasons had a tendency to arouse the baseball feeling which has been lying dormant in the city to the highest pitch, and perhaps no club in the League had a more loyal or more enthusiastic support than was accorded the Senators in 1896. From the opening of the season to its close, with the Boston at National Park September 26, the fans never wavered in their support of the team, and there was great gratification over the success achieved in moving a notch higher and tying Brooklyn for ninth place.

As satisfactory as was the advancement of the local club in the past two years, there is every reason to believe that the end is not yet, and that the close of the season now so near at hand, will witness them still higher upon the rungs of the ladder leading to the pennant. The team is evenly balanced and perfectly harmonious. There are no "sore spots," nor disgruntled players. It is a concrete body, fired with ambition and eagerness to push Washington to the front rank in the race.

Again, the club is strongly fortified in positions, where in previous years it has been lamentably weak. There are two good catchers and a corps of pitchers that cannot be weakened by accident or sickness, unless such visitation should come all at once. The infield is strengthened by the presence of such emergency men as Farrell, Wright, and Smith, and in case of accident to either Seibach, Brown, or Lush in the outfield, Charley Abbey will be on hand to jump in and don the glove of the disabled player. Therefore, the misfortunes of previous seasons cannot occur again, unless an epidemic of injury and illness should prevail. Of course this is possible, but hardly probable.

The following are the players and their positions for the season: Pitchers, Mercer, Maul, King, McGuire, Norton, German, Ashe and Swain; catchers, McGuire and Farrell; first base, Cartwright; second base, O'Brien; shortstop, DeMontreville; third base, Reilly; left field, Seibach; centerfield, Tom Brown; right field, Lush, Smith and Wright, substitute infielders, and Charley Abbey, outfield.

Of this collection all are well-known to local patrons, with the exception of Reilly, Swain and Ashe, the latter being two young pitchers who will have their first try-out in the big league at National Park. Reilly, who never having worn a Washington uniform before, is a "true and tried" leaguer, and is sure to become a strong favorite. He is an aggressive, hard-working player, and of the Tebeau, Joyce, Doyle order, and is a fighter for the rights of his club to the last ditch.

Mr. Schmetz will have absolute management of the club this season and will make the supreme attempt of his managerial career, covering a number of years spent continuously in the business, to speed the team to the front. Mr. Schmetz is in perfect accord with his men in every way, and under such a happy condition of affairs the fans can expect the most satisfactory results.

Manager Schmetz will again have Tom Brown, the fleet-footed centerfielder, as his chief lieutenant. Brown was made captain of the club last season after Joyce went to New York, and proved a decided success in the arduous position.

Tom possesses baseball acumen in a large amount, and has the quick perception and executive ability necessary to a commander of men either in large or small numbers. Personally, he is exceedingly popular with the patrons of the park, and, combined with his generalship and his qualifications as a player and "runner," will render him a valuable leader, and under his direction the Senators are sure to prove winners from the top of the bell.

Standing, then, on the threshold of the new season, it would seem that everything augurs well for the Washington Club. The summing up shows a progressive ownership and management, and the personnel of the team is all that could be desired.

To the praise of the Messrs. Wagner, it is said that when they came to Washington they found little to encourage them. They had purchased a franchise that was all but begging on the market, and received a lot of players, who, as a whole, were most mediocre. In the four years elapsing they have succeeded in giving the Capital a substantial reputation in the baseball world by gathering together a team that is not a pennant-winner, is always dangerous in a game, and in addition they have placed at the command of local patrons of the sport the only first-class accommodations in the way of grounds and buildings ever afforded in the city.

Broke Leslie's Record.

Detroit, Mich., March 27.—At the Auditorium here this afternoon, on a sixteen-lap track, J. J. Blouin, a local bicyclist, rode against the one-hour record. He covered twenty-four miles, 10 laps in the time, beating Leslie's Chicago performance of twenty-three miles, and four laps, which is the record.

Amateur Baseball.

The Young Eagles defeated the Little Cracks by a score of 11 to 7. The feature of the game was the battery work of F. B. Devereux and Bernard Flynn. The Young Eagles would like to arrange games with all teams averaging twelve years. Challenges should be sent to F. B. Devereux, captain, 54 1/2 street northwest.

Capital City Athletes

Columbia Athletic Club.

The bowling committee of the Columbia Athletic Club is in communication with the famous Carleton bowling team of Brooklyn, relative to a set of ten pin games, to be played here with the C. A. C. bowlers sometime in April. It is more than likely that the games will be arranged. It will be remembered that the Carleton's and C. A. C. bowled a home and home series two years ago. A return set may follow the games here.

The Atlantic division of the A. A. U. has granted a sanction to the C. A. C. to hold its open field games on Columbia field on June 12. This will be good news to many local athletes outside of the club who wished for an opportunity here to show their prowess in their various lines. Prof. Crossley and Capt. Sam Stinemetz were for it, that this will be one of the most attractive meets the club has ever held.

Capt. Sam Stinemetz has been elected to fill the vacancy as a representative of the C. A. C. on the Atlantic board of the A. A. U. The vacancy was caused by the death of G. M. Fagne. His successor from the club are Alexander Grant and William B. Hibbs.

Prof. Crossley is actually heels over head in work in the gymnasium. Last Saturday he had seventy-eight boys in his junior class, many more than ever before. All athletes, all ages and sizes, are now busy at work, preparing for the athletic features of the club benefit, to be given at Columbia Theater on May 3, and all are bent on making this the best athletic show ever given here.

Practice for the pyramids and ladders is had on Monday and Friday evenings. There will be from sixteen to twenty in the pyramids, the largest ever attempted here. Some fifty odd persons will take part in the athletic end of the show.

Eddie Sewell is again in harness, much to the delight of all members, and his constant difficult work will again be an attractive feature of the gymnasium and show work.

Will Stinemetz bids fair to become one of the best all-around athletes in the city. Dr. Harding is putting up something new each week in his clean, pretty work. Howard Allen and Rex Smith are at work putting on the finishing touches of their horizontal bar specialties.

Adam Johnson makes a good ladder holder; he is strong, and "knows how," and the boys have lots of confidence in him. Frank Waters, who has been on the sick list, is on the mend, and his classmates hope soon to see him out again. His splendid work is missed. Midge Ross keeps up his excellent work. Bob Bell has joined the classes, and says he feels years younger on account of the work. Dick Ryan and George Wallace will join the classes next week, and there will be lively times in the gym when they do their turn.

Mr. Von de Lube took a "snap" at the boys last week, and he proposes to give a picture to each one in the group. The board of governors at a late meeting decided to order a new eight-armed shell for the coming rowing season. It is probable a four may be added. The board is a liberal one, and will see to it that the oarsmen are well boated, and if they show speed they will again be seen in out-

of-town regattas, where they for many years made a creditable showing.

Carroll Institute Athletics.

Maurice A. Joyce, the physical instructor of Carroll Institute, was born in Saratoga, New York State, about thirty-seven years ago, and has been an athlete nearly all his life, having started out at the age of fifteen with the old Lexington North circus, and has since traveled with all the leading shows of the country. His last season on the road was with the great Forepaugh show about twelve years ago, after that he took up the study of physical culture as a study, and he promptly scored a success in this line, and for the past eight years has been an instructor, and since the opening of the Institute gym, about five years ago, has been connected actively with it, and earned for himself a great reputation.

He makes a specialty of instructing his classes in body building, seeking above all else to strengthen weak portions of a pupil's body by prescribing the proper kind of exercise necessary. In this way drawing to his gym very large classes, the members of which gratefully testify to the excellence of a method which has benefited them so much.

The professor is an accomplished gymnast and acrobat, as well as a contortionist of great reputation. When his pupils desire it he teaches specialties and gymnastics, but he devotes most of his time to class drills and body building. He is an ardent admirer of all kinds of athletics, and especially of basketball, to play which he secured a very strong team, which he has trained to play a very scientific game in the league series. He was instrumental in part in introducing the game in this city.

About three years ago he organized a class in gymnastic work for ladies, and since then these classes, held in the Institute gym twice a week, have grown to very large proportions, and from the regular work the ladies derive untold benefit.

Mr. Joyce is about five feet nine inches high, and weighs 150 pounds, and is one of the best formed and most perfectly developed men here. He carries himself well and is a good example of his healthful training. He is modest in bearing and very popular with every one who knows him in or out of athletics.

Prof. Joyce is preparing to give an athletic exhibition during the latter part of April, one of the features of which will be successes growing out of systematic training and drilling. Among the features will be free arm and body exercises, bell drills, wand drills, flying rings, horizontal and parallel bars, acrobatics and tumbling and special work.

Among the members who are doing good all-around work in the gym are Arthur May, G. A. Trapp, Thomas Brick, H. Alexander, Paul Hughes, Crutchett, Daly and O'Donoghue.

The ladies' classes will close the season with an athletic exhibition and a match game of basketball.

Washington Light Infantry.

The usual routine work in athletics is being done in the gymnasium of the Washington Light Infantry, but the "regulars" show especial desire to keep in shape.

Bicycling will be made a feature in the

corps ranks this season, and the wheeling contingent intends to organize, and a meeting for that purpose will be held shortly. Bicycle officers will at the same time be elected. It is the intention to make weekly runs of some length, and also to pay some attention to developing racing men. Social features will not be neglected.

Instructor Horan has rigged up an arrangement of his own in the gym, which he will use in instructing members of the classes in tumbling. It is a safety block and tackle and a very useful apparatus, similar in construction to ones used in the local gyms.

Much to the pleasure of his comrades, Ross, the basketball substitute, has returned to the corps after an absence of several months. He will at once take up his practice.

Contrary to expectations, the Infantry will not put a baseball team in the field this season, and the players, for whom there is great demand already, will be found on other local teams. Among the players are Havenner, Chamberlin, Gleason, Smith, Shier Lee, Harry Leach, Shreve, Montgomery, Hough, Roth, Stewart, Fischer, and Kleinschmidt.

Among the Infantry players who will be found in the professional ranks this season are Gilroy, Burns, A. Stewart, Roth and Nugent.

A big "smoker" by the combined companies of the battalion is set down for the near future, and will be of an extensive scale and will undoubtedly prove to be one of the corps' best efforts. Among the trips spoken of by the corps members is one during the summer to Winchester, Va., during the annual county fair and races at that delightful place. The members recall with much pleasure a trip to that historical city several years ago, and never tire of recounting the unlimited hospitality shown them. A feature of the fair will be a series of athletic events, and if the corps goes up, its athletes will be kept in prime shape to compete, by Company D for a big smoker, at which it is said that it will be a handsome affair.

Washington Athletic Club.

One of the best known as well as one of the most accomplished all-around athletes in the city is Robert Singleton Akers, familiarly known as "Bobby Akers," of the Washington Athletic Club, the subject of the accompanying cut.

Akers began his athletic career about five years ago in the local Y. M. C. A. gymnasium, under the capable instruction of Prof. John W. Sims, at that time its physical instructor, and now holding a similar position in the Pennsylvania Railroad branch of the Philadelphia Y. M. C. A. Being ambitious and having lots of energy, he learned quickly, adopting for himself a method of learning which was original and yet effective. He never gave up trying to do what his more experienced and accomplished classmates did until he had mastered it himself. He set up a certain model and followed out its outlines, and finally became the model for others.

At the same time that he was learning the various movements and specialties and tricks in gymnastics and acrobatics and if they do several prizes will come here sure.

The evening of April 8 has been set apart for great attention to his bodily development, the increasing of his muscles in size and strength and usefulness, with the result that today he is one of the best developed and most muscular men in the city. The development of his shoulders and back and arms is often the envy of his less fortunate (in this respect) clubmates and of athletes generally. His

breadth of back and chest is extraordinary, and added to this a great width of shoulders and development of upper and lower arms and neck. He has all the development necessary for sports, calling for lifting and carrying and pulling and holding and throwing, in each of which specialties he is equally proficient. In addition, he has splendid development of the lower limbs, and their excellent condition gives him strength and steadiness to carry what his upper body finds necessary to do. With all his development he is not lanky, but on the contrary he is as active and agile as a cat, which has many times been demonstrated in the basketball games in which his team has taken part in the league series.

About three years ago he became a member of the Washington Athletic Club, where he introduced basketball, and since then has been a most active member, taking part in every department of work in the club, and has been a tower of strength where ever he has been asked. He is captain of the basketball team, is a member of the bowling team, played on the baseball nine, does good football work, considerable of a sprinter and likewise a weight-and-hammer thrower, and his work in gymnastics and acrobatics is clean cut and accurate; is somewhat of a boxer, and as a wrestler, Greco-Roman or catch-as-catch-can, he has few equals in his class and weight, as several of the best local and out-of-town wrestlers can testify. With all his great versatility, he is modest and retiring, though proud of his abilities.

The membership of the Washington Athletic Club is growing steadily, and three or four new members a week is the rate of increase.

The entertainment committee has completed arrangements for the big hop on Easter Monday. Cards for the same will be distributed to the members at the clubhouse this evening.

The executive committee having charge of arrangements for the club's fair will meet on Tuesday evening at 7:30 o'clock at the clubhouse.

The attendance of members in the gymnasium is higher than ever before, and some good work is being done. Patrick O'Connor, one of the new members who is taking active interest in club affairs, and will make a good all-around man.

The bowling team in the major league must content itself with last place in this season's race. The players have worked hard and steadily, and deserve better success. They ran up against considerable hard luck in many of the sets played.

Eastern Athletic Club.

With the coming of the spring season the prospects of the Eastern Athletic Club grow brighter than ever. The management has numerous plans under consideration, having in view the improvement of the club and its quarters. The great drawback to the fulfillment of several of the plans is the fact that the present quarters are too small to accommodate the constantly growing membership.

At a meeting of the club, held last week, two new members were elected, and several other applications are now on file.

Mr. W. E. Grimes has been appointed a committee to look up local baseball league matters. He has been empowered to act as the club's delegate in any meetings to be held for the organization of a local league.

The club has a lot of good material from which to select a strong team, which will undoubtedly make a good place for itself. The basketball team has only three more league games to play, and the first of these is with the Carroll Institute team on Wednesday evening next at the Light Infantry Armory.

Georgetown Varsity.

The individual competitors in the indoor games held by Johns Hopkins University at Baltimore, last week were open only to Maryland athletes, and being so informed at the last moment, Manager Julius Walsh, of Georgetown Varsity, did not take over his string of athletes, sprinters and runners, as he intended doing. The great attraction of the meet was to have been the relay races, open to all college teams, but in this, too, the bustling manager was balked, for the team against which his "star" team was to have run—the Harvard Varsity team—declined to meet any team in an indoor relay race. It seems very strange that "Penny's," which has the reputation of fearing none, and willing at all times to meet all comers, should put up such an excuse and decline to meet Georgetown. The only reason that can be assigned is that "Penny's" relay team having been defeated twice last year by the "Blue and Gray," is this season fearful of a similar outcome at the hands of the same team.

Of the new men on the baseball team, Clancy, P. G., has shown himself to be a very promising pitcher. He hails from Rhode Island, and Coach Joe Kelly predicts that he will prove one of the most effective pitchers of the now very strong staff of twirlers.

Young Walsh, in last Wednesday's games, proved himself to be a pitcher of the first order. He is strongly built and pitches a terrific ball, with splendid control. Joe Kelly claims that he has all the speed of Mahoney.

Probably the most brilliant players on the team are Fleming, at second, and McFarty, in left field. McFarty, the young wonder of last year, is no longer an infant phenomenon, but is one of the most reliable players on the team. He covers third in faultless style.

The whole team played snappy ball, and this is due to the splendid coaching of Joe Kelly. His training is plainly evident and Manager Collins showed great executive ability in securing Kelly's services. Kelly has found a warm place in the hearts of all the boys, and this was evidenced in the royal send-off the boys gave him when he left the field on Wednesday to take the trip to join the Orioles at Macon.

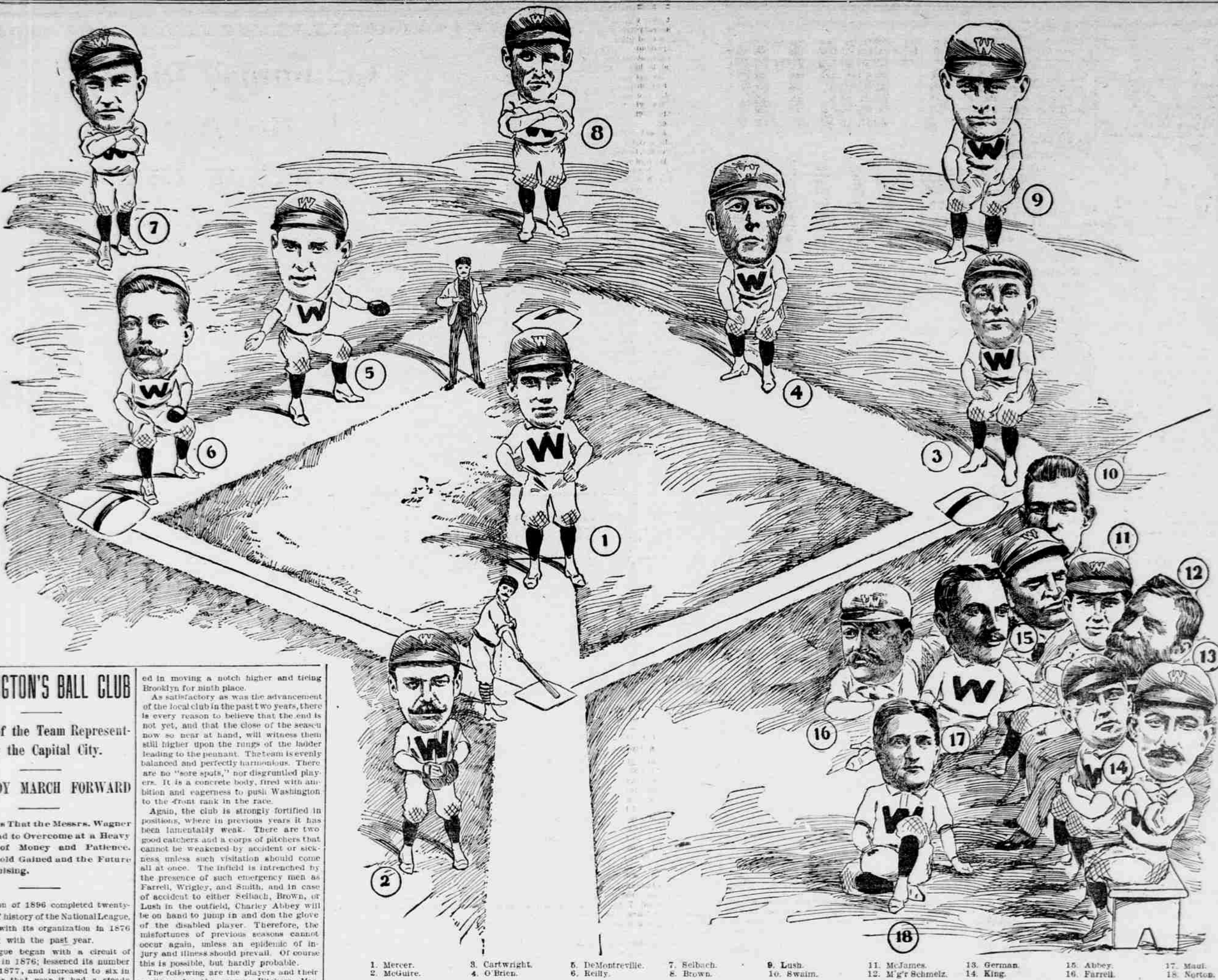
Instead of placards in store windows, as in the past, signs will be seen on the P street and Avenue cars announcing dates of playing at Georgetown. This is another of Manager Collins' wise moves.

Julius Walsh, manager of athletics, had a force of men at work on the track last week getting it in shape for the track men, who took their first outdoor work last week. Trainer William Foley was on hand to receive them, and he will get out a team of athletes that will make Yale, Harvard and Pennsy hustle for laurels at Mott Haven this spring.

The most important event in prospect is the big relay carnival to be held by Pennsy next month. Trainer Foley is busy getting out his team for that affair, and he promises it shall be a good one. Among the men who have handed their names for places on the team to Manager Walsh are Capt. Wefers, Fleming, Devereaux, Lyons, Prince, Melier, the ten-mile champion, Cady, Johnson, Kincaid, K. Walsh, Nagle, McCoy and Manager Walsh. The latter will undoubtedly make the team, as after Wefers he is among the best trackmen in the Varsity. He is a great quarter-mile, for which he has a record of 51.1-5 seconds.

Trainer Foley thinks very well of Cady and Johnson, new men to the college this year.

O. P. SCHMIDT.



1. Mercer. 3. Cartwright. 5. DeMontreville. 7. Seibach. 9. Lush. 11. McJames. 13. German. 15. Abbey. 17. Maul. 2. McGuire. 4. O'Brien. 6. Reilly. 8. Brown. 10. Swain. 12. M'g'r Schmetz. 14. King. 16. Farrell. 18. Norton.